

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
FLAGSTAFF REGIONAL PLAN 2030 AMENDMENT**

**PUBLIC HEARING
PZ-15-00022-02**

**DATE:
MEETING DATE:
REPORT BY:**

**January 15, 2016
January 27, 2016
Tiffany Antol, AICP**

REQUEST:

A minor *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* amendment request by MMV Devco, LLC to change the area type designation on Map 21 and 22 from Area in White to Existing Suburban for approximately 6.31 acres located at 1800 N. Gemini Drive.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission forward the minor *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* amendment to the City Council with a recommendation for approval.

PRESENT LAND USE:

Undeveloped land in the Area in White “area type” category.

PROPOSED LAND USE:

Existing Suburban area type, which would accommodate the development of a proposed residential project.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

North:	Vacant land, Existing Suburban and Future Employment regional plan area types;
East:	Vacant land, Area in White area type;
South:	Vacant land, Existing Suburban area type;
West:	Flagstaff Basis Charter School, Existing Suburban area type.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall find that the proposed *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* (the “Plan”) amendment meets the requirements of the General Plan and Subdivision Code (City Code Title 11).

In considering the request for an amendment to the Plan, the goals and policies should be considered to ensure that the requested change to the Future Growth Illustration is in conformance with the overall vision. “The Flagstaff Regional Plan establishes the vision for the future growth and development of Flagstaff and its surrounding area through goals and policies” (p. III-4). “General plans are not static documents; they recognize growth as a dynamic process, which may require revisions to the plan as circumstances or changes warrant” (p. III-1).

STAFF REVIEW:

Introduction/Background Discussion

This request is the first of three related items on the Commission’s agenda; the second item is identified as a Specific Plan amendment request and the third item is a Concept Zoning Map Amendment request.

MMV Devco, LLC, (the “Applicant”) is requesting a minor *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* (FRP 2030) amendment to ensure conformance with a proposed Concept Zoning Map Amendment to allow for future residential development. The Concept Zoning Map Amendment includes a total of 26.17 acres. The proposed amendment to the FRP 2030 will

affect approximately 6.31 acres of land depicted on the Future Growth Illustration (Maps 21 and 22). The remaining 19.86 acres included in the Concept Zoning Map Amendment are designated Existing Suburban and Future Employment, thus that area is not part of this amendment. Properties with both existing and future area types may use either area type to analyze plan consistency. The subject site is Lot D3 of the McMillan Mesa Village Subdivision (the "Property") and is located on the south side of N Gemini Drive between N Pinecliff Drive and E Forest Avenue.

A Regional Plan Amendment is required for expanding or changing the boundaries of one area type to another area type. The table describing the "Proposed Regional Plan Amendment Processes" is silent on how to process a plan amendment for some area types including Area in White. The Comprehensive Planning Manager has made an interpretation that if the change being requested for an area type is not shown on the table on page III-9, then the amendment will be considered a minor amendment unless it falls into the defined major amendment category.

As stated previously the Property is lot D3 of the McMillan Mesa Village Subdivision recorded May 30, 2008. The subdivision was approved in compliance with the McMillan Mesa Village Specific Plan, adopted by Ordinance on December 15, 1992. The McMillan Mesa Village Specific Plan establishes the type, location, intensity, and character of development and the required infrastructure. The plan also shapes development to respond to the physical constraints of the site, coordinates the mix of land use densities/intensities, and provides adequate circulation, open space, recreation and other public uses and facilities. The subdivision included the following infrastructure development: the construction of Gemini Drive, Pine Cliff Drive, improvements to Turquoise Drive, on-site as well as off-site public water and sewer lines, future water storage requirements, drainage improvements, and Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS) trails. The Property is currently designated for business park uses within the specific plan and is included in the Concept Zoning Map and Specific Plan Amendment requests being heard concurrent with this request.

Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030 Amendment Request

As discussed in the "How This Plan Works" chapter (page III-4), the *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030* is used in the regulatory decision-making process by the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council and City staff. The Commission and the Council are responsible for making development decisions such as zoning map amendments or specific plan amendments, which depends on whether the proposed changes or projects are consistent with the Plan's goals and policies. The Future Growth Illustration on Maps 21 and 22 (same map; one is regional scale and one city scale) and the text of the Plan will provide supplemental information for the interpretation of goals and policies. In case of any conflict between the Future Growth Illustration and the Plan's goals and policies, the goals and policies will prevail.

The Future Growth Illustration has two types of land use designations: "Area Types" describe the placemaking context of Urban, Suburban, Rural, or Employment and "Place Types" such as activity centers, corridors and neighborhoods provide the framework for the density, intensities, and mix of uses within the area types. This application proposes to change the area type of "Areas in white retain their existing entitlements" but not the place type for this project. "Areas in white retain their existing entitlements" is used to describe areas that have not been assigned an area type. In most cases, these parcels are public lands held by the Forest Service or City. The Comprehensive Planning Manager has made the interpretation that the surrounding area types on Maps 21 and 22 should be taken into account for consistency. In cases where a parcel is adjacent to more than one area type, either could be extended to the property. With this request the existing "Area in White" will, if approved, be assigned the Existing Suburban area type.

Attached are exhibits comparing the existing Future Growth Illustration map to the proposed Future Growth Illustration map. These maps and any applicable text of the FRP 2030 should be considered in the context of the Plan's goals and policies. A discussion of the FRP 2030 goals and policies including Environmental Planning & Conservation, Water Resources, Community Character, Growth Areas and Land Use, Transportation, is provided below. A complete analysis of applicable goals and policies is included in the attached narrative prepared by the Applicant.

The Applicant's stated reason for the request is that the subject parcel is better suited for a residential type of land use enabling quality development that does not cannibalize on nearby similar sites, such as the Business Incubator site

located directly to the north. This site has been determined to be one of the least likely to develop under the existing business park land use designation. The Applicant proposes a variety of residential opportunities and a larger consumer base for existing commercial and business use areas.

APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

Staff has identified the following Regional Plan Goals and Policies that could be applied to support or not support the proposed Specific Plan Amendment, Concept Zoning Map Amendment and Minor Region Plan Amendment. The following Goals and Policies have been selected for further analysis based on feedback received from the community during the review of the associated site plan:

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Consumption

Goal E.1. Increase energy efficiency.

Policy E.1.5. Promote and encourage the expansion and use of energy-efficient modes of transportation:

- a. Public Transportation*
- b. Bicycles*
- c. Pedestrians*

Goal E&C.2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy E&C.2.1. Encourage the reduction of all energy consumption, especially fossil-fuel generated energy, in public, commercial, industrial, and residential sectors.

The McMillan Mesa subdivision and the Property are accessible to energy-efficient modes of transportation. A regular transit route runs along E Forest Avenue and a diversion route during the school year runs along N Gemini Drive for drop off and pick up from Basis Charter School. N Gemini Drive and N Pine Cliff were constructed with bike lanes and sidewalks. Additionally, a network of FUTS trails that provide access to the many surrounding neighborhoods, schools, shopping centers, and open spaces that serve the area. The centralized location of the Property and the variety of available transportation modes to and from the Property could reduce overall energy consumption for either residential or commercial uses.

Habitat Protection

Goal E&C.6. Protect, restore, and improve ecosystem health and maintain native plant and animal community diversity across all land ownerships in the Flagstaff region.

Policy E&C.9.2. Construction projects employ strategies to minimize disturbed area, soil compaction, soil erosion, and destruction of vegetation.

Goal E&C.10. Protect indigenous wildlife populations, localized and larger-scale wildlife habitats, ecosystem processes, and wildlife movement areas throughout the planning area.

The McMillan Mesa subdivision was approved in conjunction with a Resource Protection Plan that preserves the steep slopes and forest resources within the area. No resources were identified for protection on the Property as part of that plan. The completion of the subdivision infrastructure and subsequent vacancy has established invasive weeds on the Property and the surrounding areas. Staff will be recommending conditions of approval with the Concept Zoning Map Amendment to address the ongoing issues with invasive weeds. The site is not located within any identified wildlife corridors and the subject site is outside the grasslands and big tree designated areas as illustrated in Map 7: Significant Natural Resources. The Property is frequented by abundant wildlife; however, this property has become fragmented from the larger wildlife habitat and no longer provides a safe refuge. It is anticipated that large mammals will discontinue the use of this area as development occurs.

Water

Goal WR.4. Logically enhance and extend the City's public water, wastewater, and reclaimed water services including their treatment, distribution, and collection systems in both urbanized and newly developed areas of the City to provide an efficient delivery of services.

Policy WR.4.3. Development requiring public utility services will be located within

the Urban Growth Boundary.

Per Map 21, the Property is located within the Urban Growth Boundary. The subdivision and the Property lie within two water pressure zones served by the City of Flagstaff. The City required the subdivision to provide a looped connection to both pressure zones. Pursuant to the current development agreement, the City is requiring the developer to construct a new water storage tank sized to meet the development's average daily usage plus two-hour flow. The developer is required to acquire the necessary land and construct an adequately sized storage tank at a high enough elevation to provide adequate pressure for the associated water lines. The developer does have the option to use one of the City's existing tank sites depending on available space. The City may share in the cost of any excess storage tank capacity if this excess capacity is determined to be in the City's best interest. Because the subdivision did not exceed a demand of 800 single-family home usage threshold, there were no water production requirements. The subdivision is not served by reclaimed water.

Water Quality

Goal WR.5. Manage watersheds and stormwater to address flooding concerns, water quality, environmental protections, and rainwater harvesting.

Goal WR.6. Protect, preserve, and improve the quality of surface water, groundwater, and reclaimed water in the region.

Policy WR.6.4. Encourage low-impact development practices.

The current proposal would take approximately 21.32 new acres out of commercial development design standards and replace it with medium density residential that allows for a maximum building coverage of 40% and a height restriction of 35 feet in addition to the reduction of density from an adjacent parcel. The applicant has shown that these reductions in concert with low-impact development design required for each parcel, that the sub-regional basins will function more efficiently by reducing the impervious cover and decreasing the density of development. The regional detention ponds have been built and it is anticipated that the ponds will be modified as needed for the actual development that occurs on each development area.

Scenic Resources and Natural Setting

Goal CC.1. Reflect and respect the region's natural setting and dramatic views in the built environment.

Policy CC.1.1. Preserve the natural character of the region through planning and design to maintain view of significant landmarks, sloping landforms, rock outcroppings, watercourses, floodplains, and meadows, and conserve stands of ponderosa pine.

Goal CC.4. Design and develop all projects to be contextually sensitive, to enhance a positive image and identity for the region.

While the Regional Plan does not identify specific viewshed corridors for protection, it is clear that this development could impact views to Mount Eldon and the San Francisco Peaks from existing residential neighborhoods. The proposal to rezone this location from Research and Development to Medium Density Residential will reduce the allowed building height maximum from 60 feet to 35 feet. The applicant intends to develop the areas with structures that will be required to meet all of the City's design standards including architecture that respects the traditions of the neighborhood and the natural environment.

Reinvestment

Goal LU.1. Invest in existing neighborhoods and activity centers for the purpose of developing complete, and connected places

Policy LU.1.1. Plan for and support reinvestment within the existing city centers and neighborhoods for increased employment and quality of life.

Policy LU.1.6. Establish greater flexibility in development standards and processes to assist developer in overcoming challenges posed by redevelopment and infill sites.

Policy LU.1.7. Consider creative policy and planning tools (such as transfer of develop rights or transfer of development obligations) as a means to incentive redevelopment and infill.

Goal ED.9. Promote redevelopment and infill.

Goal LU.4. Balance housing and employment land uses with the preservation and protection of our unique natural and cultural setting.

Policy LU.4.1 Develop neighborhood plans, specific plans, area plans, and master plans for all neighborhood activity centers, corridors, and gateways as necessary.

The subject site is located within a subdivision developed with road and utility infrastructure and, for this reason, the proposed project is defined as infill development. McMillan Mesa is a central neighborhood within the City of Flagstaff with convenient access to churches, schools, shopping and general commercial areas. The Applicant believes that the existing zoning entitlements do not allow for development that is fully compatible with the surrounding neighborhood as the current proposal. The applicant would like to emulate the characteristics of the neighborhood by reallocating existing development rights into this area. This neighborhood is part of an adopted specific plan that sets out development standards for providing a mix of housing and employment land uses. A total of 42.94 acres of land will remain in the Research and Development zone, which is intended to be occupied by employment land uses.

Compact Development

Goal LU.5. Encourage compact development principles to achieve efficiencies and open space preservation.

Policy LU.5.2. Promote infill development over peripheral expansion to conserve environmental resources, spur economic investments, and reduce the cost of providing infrastructure and services.

Policy LU.5.3. Promote compact development appropriate to and within the context of each area type: urban, suburban, and rural.

Policy LU.5.4. Encourage development to be clustered in appropriate locations as a means of preserving natural resources and open space, and to minimize service and utility costs, with such tools as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR).

Policy LU.5.5. Encourage the distribution of density within neighborhoods in relationship to associated activity centers and corridors, infrastructure, transportation, and natural constraints such as slopes and drainages.

Goal LU.6. Provide for a mix of land uses.

Policy LU.6.1. Consider a variety of housing types and employment options when planning new development and redevelopment projects.

Policy LU.6.3. Encourage new mixed-use neighborhoods in appropriate locations within the growth boundary.

As previously stated, the development of the Property qualifies as infill rather than greenfield development. The site has been disturbed, has been reviewed for the preservation of resources, and has the existing infrastructure necessary for development. McMillan Mesa is centrally located and is not considered a peripheral expansion. Open Space preservation was provided as part of the McMillan Mesa Specific Plan and the proposed development rights transfer maintains those open spaces. Additionally, if the site is developed residentially, 15% of the gross site will be required to be set aside as open space. The reallocation of residential zoning entitlements will allow for development that is more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. While this proposal does not fully support the goal to provide for a mix of land uses, the Applicant is proposing to provide a mix of housing types, both rental and ownership, but to do that commercial and business park uses must be removed from the neighborhood. The Specific Plan identifies this area as being a mixed-use activity center; however, the FRP 2030 did not identify this location as an Activity Center.

Suburban Area Type

Goal LU.13. Increase the variety of housing options and expand opportunities for employment and neighborhood shopping within all suburban neighborhoods.

Policy LU.13.1. Prioritize connectivity for walking, biking, and driving within and between surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy LU.13.2. Consider public transit connections in suburban development.

Policy LU.13.4. Plan suburban development to include a variety of housing options.

Policy LU.13.9. Use open space and FUTS trail to provide walking and biking links from residential uses to employment, shopping, schools, parks, and neighborhoods.

The request to change the area type designation from “Area in White” to Existing Suburban is further supported by these Suburban Area Type goals and policies. While the request does further the Applicant’s goal of rezoning the Property from Research and Development to Medium Density Residential, the characteristics of the area clearly meet the intent and qualities preferred in suburban development.

Transit, Bicycle And Pedestrian

Goal T.1. Improve mobility and access throughout the region.

Policy T.1.2. Apply Complete Street Guidelines to accommodate all appropriate modes of travel in transportation improvement projects.

Policy T.1.6. Provide and promote strategies that increase alternative modes of travel and demand for vehicular travel to reduce peak period traffic.

Policy T.6.2. Establish and maintain a comprehensive, consistent, and highly connected system of bikeways and FUTS trails.

These policies also support the request of changing the area type designation to Existing Suburban due to the level of existing infrastructure improvements that support both vehicular and alternative modes of transportation.

Policy Analysis

This list below identifies several key points and community benefits supporting (+) or not supporting (-) the proposed amendment:

- + The Property is considered infill development, is within the Urban Growth Boundary and is efficiently and effectively provided with facilities and services by the City
- + McMillan Mesa is a centrally located neighborhood with convenient access to many required resources;
- + Existing transportation infrastructure and existing water infrastructure is available at this site;
- + The project will reduce traffic due to a reduction in development densities and intensities;
- + The existing subdivision has already addressed on-site and off-site utility infrastructure improvements for larger anticipated development densities and intensities;
- + The project is proposed to provide 50 single-family residences and 138 multi-family residences within an existing neighborhood;
- The project does remove business park and commercial uses from the neighborhood, thereby reducing new employment opportunities;

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICE IMPACT ANALYSIS: See the Specific Plan Amendment and Concept Zoning Map Amendment staff report for complete Public Impact Analysis discussion.

Public Input

Public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council are conducted in conjunction with the Specific Plan Amendment and Concept Zoning Map Amendment requests. In accordance with Arizona Revised Statute and Section 10-20.30.080 (p. 20.30-9) of the Zoning Code, notice of the public hearings were provided by placing an ad in the Daily Sun, posting notices on the property, and mailing a notice to all property owners within 600 feet of the Specific Plan boundary (exceeding the 300-foot requirement).

In accordance with Section 10-20.30.060 of the Zoning Code (p. 20.30-5), a Citizen Participation Plan was prepared and implemented prior to the scheduling of the public hearings and a copy of the Citizen Participation Report is attached to the rezoning report for review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. As of this writing, Planning staff has received five emails in response to this request which are attached to the accompanying Specific Plan and Zoning Map Amendments staff report.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff believes that the proposed amendment to the Regional Plan is supportable under the guidelines of the *Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030*, and would recommend approval of the proposed amendment.

Attachments:

- Minor Regional Plan Amendment Application and applicant's General Plan Analysis
- Future Growth Illustration – Existing
- Future Growth Illustration – Proposed